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**Subject:** Farm Bill 2007 Official Comments - 12/24/2005 12:33 AM CST  
**Date Sent:** 12/24/2005 12:33:29 CST  
**Date Received:** 12/24/2005 12:35:00 CST

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Question1: A system that would deliver financial aid to PRODUCERS by helping them pay for major input expenses only. Instead of DCP's that can go to landowners who don't farm or in effect take the payments through higher rents, offer aid only redeemable for ag inputs. This could also save budgeted money by more effectively getting it into our local infrastructure and reducing those who are able to work the present system for cash while completely diverting it from ag. Established farmers can't stay in business in the present system so significant changes must be made in the next farm bill to encourage new/young farmers.

Question2: First of all, we need to open our markets to anyone who wants our products. Picking and choosing our customers because we don't agree with their government or their treatment of their people hurts all parties involved. They are still hungry and we suffer the loss of exported ag products. I'm not sure any embargo has ever been beneficial to the U.S., Cuba is a prime example. These actions probably only further anti-American sentiments throughout the world and we must wonder what kind of unholy alliances this may foster. If we offer any aid in the form of food it must be U.S. ag products, not money they can use to buy from our competitors. Try to maintain a level playing field, it seems the E.U. and China have high tariffs on our exports while we seemingly welcome their products here.

Question3: Pay limits can be a good thing but we must be careful of what we call a large farm. The days of that warm and fuzzy feeling you get from looking at an "old 100 acre family farm" are gone. I am a typical modern family farmer with all hired help coming from family members. It takes what some might call a large farm (1200 ac.) just to support a family of four with a wife who has a part time off farm job. Modern farms have to be efficient and economies of scale dictate size.

Mega-farms might be next, but I think too large can also be inefficient. We as farmers really want our income from the market place so some form of a reshaped setaside program coupled with government reserves might be considered. (Production control)

Question4: I think conservation and stewardship are a couple of things most American farmers excel in and rewarding them for their efforts would be well received by the public, but the devil lies in the details. Maybe a points system for certain "green" efforts could replace the CCP'S, but with each region conditions/problems vary greatly. Also need to make sure benefits go to producers. How could the gov. verify results? Sorry, not many ideas on this one.

Question5: As I mentioned in the first reply to question #1, a system that would deliver aid to the actual producer or someone who will put that money into ag in their community. (See 1st reply) I've been a Coop president and seen a steady decrease in our sales because farmers simply aren't getting the money intended for them in this decoupled type payment system. Tenant farmers are at the mercy of the land owners and are forced to give all or most of DCP'S and some CCP'S to the landowners

or just quit farming. This money doesn't turn over in our local ag communities. I really appreciate our government's efforts to help us, but in my area it has really been failed policy.

Question6: In my opinion, we don't need a broader range of activities, it seems the govt. is in almost every type of subsidy from shrimp to soybeans. I do think the govt. could help this country be more self sufficient and benefit ag by really ramping up renewable fuel source subsidies. Fuel prices make these products more competitive already, lets keep this money at home. Maybe aggressive mandatory blends, all govt. vehicles on renewables, etc. I know farm policy can be very complicated and for every action there can be many unintended reactions therefore I don't think this next farm bill will be simple. I really think it may take bits and pieces of what we have done for the past thirty years plus some new ideas incorporating conservation and stewardship. Thanks for the forum and please consider my comments.